

March 17, 2017

Dear Partners,

We are writing to inform you of some important changes in our Services for New Americans (SNA) program.

With President Trump's recent Executive Orders targeting immigration and refugee resettlement in the United States, most of the key services that we provide to refugees in Massachusetts and New Hampshire have slowed or stopped altogether. This means that our SNA program revenue is greatly impacted, and future program funding at this point is unknown. What we do know is that refugee resettlement in our country will be significantly reduced with the new administration.

Realizing the consequence of these changes, we took the time to carefully review their impact to our SNA program and to our entire organization. We wanted to be sure we fully understood all of our potential options before making any decisions impacting our staff and services.

What became clear is that the level of uncertainty about the future of refugee resettlement in the U.S. requires that we scale down our program until we have more definitive information. Unfortunately, these changes include staff reductions and the elimination of SNA positions in all three program locations (Worcester and Westfield, MA and Concord, NH). In total, 20 employees are impacted by full layoffs or reduced hours, and four open positions are being eliminated. Additional reductions have been made in our supporting administrative departments.

Managers and staff affected by these changes were notified on Monday, March 13, and many of our impacted staff will leave Ascentria on Friday, March 17.

We wish we had other options available, but sadly we don't. However, we are committed to fulfilling our contractual and ethical obligations to the people we serve, and will strive to retain high quality services despite these staffing and fiscal challenges. SNA in NH will continue to provide case management, health case management, school-based services, employment, orientation and cultural adjustment, and volunteer support; however these services may be scaled back.

Unfortunately, this is a difficult but necessary step to take for Ascentria to remain a strong and viable organization. Yet, this setback only strengthens our resolve to move forward in assisting our refugees and all those we serve, to achieve their full potential and thrive.

We are immensely grateful for the dedication and hard work of all staff affected by these changes. They have truly made a difference in the lives of others.

Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns. We most sincerely appreciate your ongoing support during this challenging time.



Timothy Johnstone
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Director
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